



## GOSSIP OF THE SWELLS. WHAT OUR "400" ARE TALKING ABOUT.

By Cholly Knickerbocker.

GOSSIP is the order of the week. There is so much of it that one hardly knows where to begin. Probably the most sensational talk that is going on just now is that which concerns a very rich young gentleman who married a very beautiful young lady a few months ago. There is no allegation of estrangement between this wealthy bridegroom and this beautiful bride, but the reappearance here of an important factor in his prenuptial life has caused the chappies to say "Oh!" and "Ah!" and to wink the other eye.

To be plain about this thing, this Croesus bridegroom, like many another bridegroom with or without money, had an affair du coeur before his marriage. He was devoted to a handsome blond woman who came from the South—New Orleans, I think—and so charmed him that his dotting mamma and papa were in terror lest he should marry her.

Therefore their relief was immense when he did lead to the altar one of the prettiest and wildest descendants of one of the old New York families. Very lately the handsome blond woman has come back to New York, and is seen driving in the Park every afternoon. Incidentally, the young bridegroom drives there also, and the ever watchful gossips, putting two and two together, hold up their hands in mock amazement and predict all sorts of things of a scandalous nature.

For my own part, I don't believe that there will be any scandal. The young bridegroom would have very poor taste indeed if he didn't prefer his bride to the other women, and, so far as driving in the Park is concerned, it is almost an hourly occurrence of an afternoon for old flames to meet there without feeling even an inclination to rekindle.

The political chappies are telling a good story about Sidney Harris. Sidney, you know, is the husband of little Kitty Brady, and therefore married into politics. As it were, for Kitty's father and uncle, the late John R. Brady and the late James T. Brady, were great politicians in their day.

It appears that somebody promised Sidney Harris the Democratic nomination for Congress in the Eighth Congressional District, and Sidney was so sure of the promise being carried out that he not only went to the convention to accept the nomination, but took with him a carefully prepared speech thanking the convention for the honor conferred upon him.

The Eighth Congressional District has two ends to it that are respectively known as the "upper ten" and the "lower five." Sidney belongs to the "upper ten." The "lower five" had not been consulted about the nomination of Mr. Harris, and so when the convention was held it went in and

nominated a man named Rioridan, whose cognomen does not appear in the blue book nor in any list of the Four Hundred.

Sidney sat and waited for the committee of notification to come and bring him before the convention, and meantime Rioridan was making a speech accepting the nomination to Congress. When Sidney learned what had happened he was dumb with amazement, but being a philosopher he soon recovered himself.

"I didn't mind losing the nomination so much," said he afterward, "but it did grieve me to think that I had prepared that speech and got no chance to deliver it. I hated to think that all the mental labor that I had given to it should be wasted. I thought I might offer it to Rioridan, but Rioridan seemed to have a speech of his own, so I went away with it in my pocket, and knowing that my friend George B. McClellan was to be nominated without opposition, I took it to him and told him that he might use it and thereby save himself the trouble of writing one of his own. He looked it over and jumped at the offer. I find some consolation in the fact that while I lost the nomination my speech was not lost, for McClellan delivered it in accepting his own nomination."

But let's get away from the vulgar subject of politics and go back to our own marions glances.

Mrs. Astor closed Beechwood, her Newport residence, yesterday and came back to her mansion on Fifth avenue. Now we may expect all the rest of the 400 to hasten back to town. When Mrs. Astor sets the homeward flight the others follow their leader.

A few may linger a little while longer at Newport and the Long Island set will undoubtedly spend the glorious October days riding to hounds and pursuing those other diversions common to the Meadowbrook set.

But the vast majority will do as Mrs. Astor does, and thus it will come about that the town will quickly take on its wonted winter complexion and the gay season will be inaugurated.

It is an open secret with the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Anson W. Hard that preparations have been begun already for the wedding of her eldest daughter, Miss Sarah Hard, although the wedding day is as far off as January 18. St. Bartholomew's has been chosen as the place for the ceremony, and no effort will be spared to make this one of the star nuptial events of the season.

In order to devote herself to the preparations for her daughter's wedding, Mrs. Hard has abandoned the young people's dancing class that she had charge of last year and the cotillions that were directed by her will be discontinued. This in itself is not important, although

many of the younger set will miss such diversion, but it goes to show that when a fashionable mother has a fashionable daughter about to be married, the wedding is the all-absorbing thing.

And speaking of weddings and driving in the park, the most noticeable couple to be seen on the avenue every afternoon are Miss Mari Churchill and Harold A. J. Baring, who are to be married a week from to-morrow.

These people are in direct contrast to each other in personal appearance. Miss Churchill is tall and fair, and Mr. Baring is short and dark.

It will be of interest to the ladies who read this column to know that Miss Churchill has decided to discard the conventional bridal veil and to wear a picture hat with feathers at the altar. Furthermore, she has selected a cream shade of color instead of pure white, and as she will wear an abundance of lace one may readily imagine the loveliness of the picture that she will present in her wedding costume.

By an association of ideas I am led now to tell how our rich people evade the Dingley bill in preparing bridal trousseaus.

They send their dressmakers over to Paris to study the latest fashions and effects. Instead of buying the garments there the dressmaker studies the French creations, makes detailed copies of them on paper, returns to New York and builds the gowns and other things here.

The results are satisfactory both in the stylishness of the trousseaus obtained and in the evasion of the customs duties.

Two brides of the past week had widely differing ideas as to the observance of marriage superstitions.

The wedding day of one of them was set for the 13th before the bride realized the significance of the date. Subsequently the full force of the old antipathy to "13" came upon her, and she was confronted with a choice between a change of dates, which in itself is considered unlucky, or to combat in some way the unluckiness of "13."

She chose the latter course and hid an opal ring in her bridal bouquet. After the ceremony she hid old "13" another blow by having her tulle veil torn into bits and distributed among the guests.

After such precautions as these misfortune should certainly flee at her approach. The other bride of the week, Miss Klipp, who married Mr. Carbery, was so reckless in her fearlessness of all superstitions that she deliberately chose Friday for her wedding day.

If we may judge of Mrs. Carbery's future by the way that her wedding dance went off in the Astor-Gallery at the Waldorf-Astoria, it would seem that she has little



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to fear from this defiance of a superstition that is common to most brides.

The date of the wedding of Miss Elsie Barber and Frederick Prime Delafield has just been fixed for November 10 in Trinity Chapel.

A reception will follow the ceremony, and this will be given at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Barber, at No. 45 West Thirty-seventh street.

Both these young people are very popular. Miss Barber having been a belle since her formal introduction a couple of years ago, and Mr. Delafield inheriting from his mother, Mrs. Lewis Livingston Delafield, many of those attractive qualities which have given her a leading place among the fashionable matrons of New York.

Mrs. Richard Irvin, it may be said incidentally, is very fortunate in the character of her tenants. The house that she has just leased to Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Mackay was occupied last year by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., and the year before that by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Gebhard.

And speaking of the Gebhards, they have begun to build a new residence on Seventy-ninth street, just out of Fifth avenue. Meantime they will occupy the cottage at Westbury, L. I., where they now are. Mrs. Gebhard will be in mourning this winter for her father, the late John Boncher Morris, of Baltimore.

## AN OWNERLESS ESTATE. ARE THERE ANY SKOTTOWS STILL ALIVE?

By the Marquise de Fontenoy.

IF there are any descendants still living in this country of that Squire Skottow who was Governor of Virginia at the outbreak of the War for Independence, they would do well to communicate with the Somerset Herald, at the Royal College of Ipswich, in London, with a view to becoming possessed of immensely valuable estates and likewise of two English baronetcies.

The estates comprise the extensive lands of the ancient families of Corbet and Skottow in Shropshire and Norfolkshire, as well as in London. In the metropolis the estates comprise no less than five acres near Chancery street. Pleadably, while the remainder of the land is in the neighborhood of Regents Park.

There is an extraordinary romance connected with this property, which must be told in order to explain how the question as to its possession has been raised.

The family of Corbet claims its descent in a direct and unbroken line from the standard bearer of William the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings. A little over two hundred years ago Thomas Corbet, nephew of that Miles Corbet who was one of the judges of King Charles I., and executed at Charing Cross as a regicide after the Restoration, and son of Sir Thomas Corbet, the then head of the family, had the misfortune to kill in a solitary encounter a younger brother of Lord Essex, the cause of the encounter being that Corbet had ruined his friend's wife. As there were no seconds a warrant was issued for the arrest of Corbet on a charge of manslaughter, and he escaped abroad.

Subsequently he returned, and under the name of John Powell married the only daughter and heiress of a great territorial magnate in Norfolk named Skottow, the family being of Danish origin. By royal licence he, after his marriage, assumed the name of Skottow, and was created baronet. One of his grandsons became a Governor of the East India Company, while another was, as stated above, Governor of Virginia, when the War for Independence broke out.

Before Corbet died under the name of Sir Thomas Skottow, he learned of the death of his father, Sir Thomas Corbet, and of his two elder brothers without issue, and as he did not present himself as the heir thereto, the Corbet baronetcy became dormant, while the large estates passed into the possession of the female branch of the family.

The last holder of the Skottow baronetcy was living at Amiens, in France, in 1842, when his mother, a widow, was shot and killed by a rejected French suitor. But fourteen years old at the time and bearing the name of Thomas, he disappeared shortly afterward, and has never been heard of since. If he can be found he is the heir to the Skottow baronetcy, as well as to the Skottow estates, which at

the time of his mother's murder were in the possession of a different branch of the family, that has now become extinct.

If this Sir Thomas Skottow cannot be found, then both the Skottow estates and the baronetcy belong to the senior of the descendants of Governor Skottow, of Virginia.

With regard to the Corbet baronetcy and estates, which are quite as valuable, a slightly more complicated procedure will have to be inaugurated. Landed estates that fall by inheritance to an outlaw become escheat to the Crown. Now, if the homicide, Thomas Powell, was living when his father and elder brothers died and there is evidence to prove this, then in that case the estates should have been escheated to the Crown. It was only on the misapprehension that Thomas Corbet was dead that they passed into the possession of one of the female branches of the family.

The procedure, therefore, to be inaugurated is as follows: A motion will be made in chancery applying to the Crown to take possession of the Corbet property on the ground that it should have been escheated to the latter on the death of the father and brothers of the homicide, Thomas Corbet. No lapse of time can bar any claim of the Crown.

Nowadays, it is a practice of the Crown to make a grant of all escheated property to the natural heirs, and once the Crown holds the property it will be requested to do this. These natural heirs will be either young Sir Thomas Skottow, who vanished from Amiens in 1842 after the murder of his mother, or falling him the descendants through the male line only of Governor Skottow, of Virginia.

If none of these can be found, then the property will pass into the possession of a barrister of the name of Skottow, in London, and should he die without issue, into the hands of a clergyman of the Church of England bearing the same name.

Let me add in conclusion that documentary evidence exists at the College of Heralds in the British Museum, and also among the Skottow family papers, authenticating in every particular the above extraordinary story.

Every one who entertains the slightest interest of good will toward Finland, the only portion of Russia that has successfully struggled until now to retain its autonomy and its popular and constitutional form of government, will be sorry to hear of the appointment of General Bobrikow to the post of Governor-General of this progressive and prosperous grand duchy.

I have known General Bobrikow for many years as the chief of staff of Grand Duke Vladimir, who is one of the Czar's uncles and commander-in-chief of the entire military district in which St. Petersburg is comprised. General Bobrikow is

a pan-Slavist of the deepest dye, and may be relied upon to use every means in his power, insidious as well as brutal, to deprive Finland of her constitutional rights and to subject her to the same autocratic administration as the remainder of the Russian Empire, this in defiance of the solemn guarantee given in 1809 by the Russian crown that Finland should enjoy in perpetuity the same constitutional rights and political prerogatives that she enjoyed previously under Swedish rule. Moreover, each Russian sovereign on his accession to the throne takes a solemn oath to observe the Finnish Constitution. General Bobrikow is not of noble birth, but of very plebeian origin—in fact, he is what is known as a "popovitch"—that is to say, the son of a drunken village priest, and the modern history of Russia shows what a large percentage of priests' sons there are among the criminal classes of the empire.

By means of intrigue, subservience and a selfishness beyond all description he managed to raise himself to the rank of major-general before he was forty-four years of age. Alexander III., on his accession to the throne, found him a member of the military household of his father, and being unwilling to have such a man in his entourage, promoted him to the rank of lieutenant-general solely to get rid of him. It was then that Bobrikow attached himself to the fortunes of Grand Duke Vladimir, who is rather a stupid man, and whom by dint of flattery and surrounding him with creatures of his own selection he before long got entirely under his own control.

The very fact that General Bobrikow should now be a very rich man leads to little color to the tales according to which he has made use of his position as chief of the staff of the metropolitan military district to accept large bribes for military contracts and appointments, and many stories are likewise current which indicate that he is as unscrupulous as he is corrupt.

As everything concerning the young Queen of Holland is of interest, it may be stated that her chief pet at the present moment is a beautiful fox terrier named Poppy, who has completely superseded her old friend and former playmate, the Irish setter Swell.

The latter has become old, and, I regret to add, mangy, and if he has not already been assisted by means of chloroform toward the canine heaven it is solely because the young Queen will not hear of his being put to death. He is, however, kept in the background, sees his young mistress but rarely, and is reported to have become very morose, his soured temper being in all probability due to his ponderings on the instability of royal favor, especially in cases where the sovereign is a capricious young Queen.

## WHAT OUR SOCIETY WOMEN ARE WEARING THIS SEASON.

## BEST DRESSES OF THE WEEK.

## COSTUMES SEEN AT THE SWELL GOLF TOURNAMENT.



Mrs. J. Allen Townsend.

Mrs. J. Allen Townsend wore an elaborate costume of gray and white. Her entire gown was trimmed with broad bands of gray satin. The gray cloth bodice was cut with a slight blouse effect, and opened to show a vest of accordion pleated white satin. H 463

Mrs. Carl Fischer-Hansen.

Mrs. Carl Fischer-Hansen's costume was a black and cerise creation. The skirt was of Venetian cloth entirely in black, and made with a long Y-shaped overskirt in front. The bodice was black, but a decided touch of novelty was given it by having the sleeves and yoke of shirred cerise silk.

Miss Carol Elditz.

Miss Carol Elditz wore a golf skirt of gray tweed with a gay shirt waist in Roman stripes. Her hat was a sombrero of gray felt with a folded band around the crown of Roman silk in shades of pink, blue, green and gray.

Miss Beatrix Hoyt.

Miss Beatrix Hoyt's golf suit was of stout Scotch tweed, brown in color and lined with scarlet. Her coat was a Norfolk jacket, and was of the same material as the skirt. She wore a small white sailor hat drawn well over her forehead, a blue shirt waist and a white Ascot tie.

Mrs. T. Suffern Taylor.

Mrs. T. Suffern Taylor wore a black broadcloth gown, made with a short coat and a skirt with a demi-train. The collar and revers of the coat were white, and the waist, which completed the costume, was of white and yellow check silk finished with a belt and a dashing bow at the belt side.

Miss Eunice Terry.

Miss Eunice Terry's gown was of black cloth and silk conspicuously trimmed with bands of ecru lace insertion. The skirt was made with a bounce, and the coat was an Eton jacket with a deep sailor collar of white satin and cream lace with big revers to match.